

Remarks

Claims 20-29 were rejected as unpatentable over VALIMAA et al. 5,926,769 in view of INOUE et al. 6,332,024, and claims 30-33 were rejected further in view of GIEL et al. 5,881,377. Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested in view of the perfection of the claim to priority of the corresponding Japanese application.

Applicant submits in the Appendix a verified English translation of Japanese Application No. 037819/1999 that was filed in Japan on February 16, 1999. The filing date of the Japanese application precedes the §102(e) date of October 19, 1999 of INOUE et al. Accordingly, INOUE et al. is not available as a reference for this application. Since INOUE et al. is not available as a reference, the rejections based on INOUE et al. must be withdrawn, and such is respectfully requested.

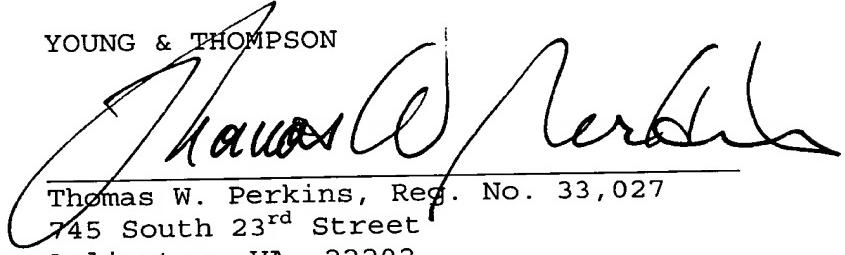
In view of the submission of the verified English translation of the priority Japanese application, it is believed that the present application has been placed in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Application No. 09/504,875  
Reply to Office Action of March 10, 2004  
Docket No. 8022-1022

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. §1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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TWP/lrs